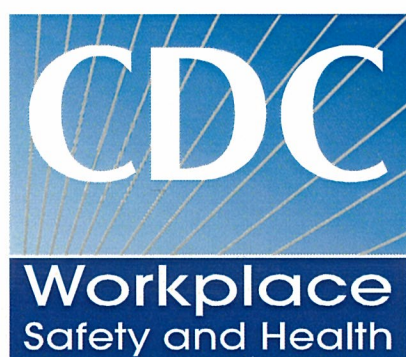


HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NIOSH HEALTH HAZARD EVALUATION

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) received a management request for a health hazard evaluation (HHE) at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Glenn Research Center (GRC) in Cleveland, Ohio. The request was about ongoing employee and union concerns about a possible higher rate of cancer among current and former employees of Buildings 500 and 501. A site visit was made in October 2008.



What NIOSH Did

- We looked at asbestos reports and environmental sampling from the past 14 years from Buildings 500 and 501. We also looked at responses to concerns from building occupants.
- We reviewed surveys from current and former employees in Buildings 500 and 501. Some survey respondents had cancer. These surveys were provided by individual employees, management, and the union (Lewis Engineers and Scientists Association).
- We reviewed a confidential list of employees who have cancer. This list was provided by a supervisor.
- We looked at a list of retirements, medical and regular, from both buildings for the past 5 years. This list was provided by the GRC human resources office.
- We surveyed Buildings 500 and 501 to evaluate indoor environmental quality (IEQ) and the ventilation systems. We also measured carbon dioxide, temperature, and relative humidity.
- We checked facility records for evidence of previous environmental contamination of the air or drinking water.

What NIOSH Found

- Twenty different types of cancer were diagnosed among employees of Buildings 500 and 501.
- The most common types of cancer diagnosed were breast, lung, and prostate. These are the three most common cancers in the United States.
- The different types of cancers do not suggest a common exposure among employees diagnosed with cancer.
- The number of cancer cases and types of cancers do not appear unusual.
- No significant hazardous exposures were found in or near the two buildings.
- On the day of this evaluation, the carbon dioxide, temperature, and relative humidity levels in both buildings were within acceptable IEQ guidelines.
- Much of the asbestos in Buildings 500 and 501 had been removed, and the remaining was being correctly managed in place.
- Minor IEQ problems were found, such as water damage and poorly maintained fan coil units. These problems are not associated with the cancers diagnosed among employees.

What NIOSH Recommends

- No further investigation into the reported cancers is recommended.
- Management and union officials should encourage employees to learn about known cancer risk factors, measures they can take to reduce their risk for preventable cancers, and availability of cancer screening programs for certain types of cancer.
- Improve maintenance of fan coil units.

What To Do For More Information

We encourage you to read the full report. If you would like a copy, either ask your health and safety representative to make you a copy or call 1-513-841-4252 and ask for HETA Report #2008-0166-3079